
BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES,

January 20th, 1842.

Read and laid on the table and ordered to be printed.

MEMORIAL

OF THE

GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND,

COUNTER TO THE PASSAGE OF

The Bill relating to the Importation of Passengers.

MEMORIAL.

*To the Honorable
the General Assembly of Maryland.*

The German Society of Maryland, incorporated many years since by your honorable body, the better to empower it for its benevolent offices, begs leave respectfully to interpose its objection to the passage of the bill now pending before you, which seeks to deprive this society of its share of the charge on passengers, arriving in the State from foreign countries. It was at the instance of this society, that the law imposing the charge in question was passed, they conceiving it just that the emigrants to this country should by a light personal tax contribute to the relief of the distressed of their own body; and to preclude or lessen the burdens of pauperism to our community. The society was persuaded, that while this exaction continued mainly for the benefit and under the auspices of the German and Hybernian Societies, and tended to increase their means of doing good, the questionable constitutionality of the law would not discourage a perfect obedience to it, nor in the least interfere with its avails. And such has been experienced to be the kindly and respectful conformity to the demands of this legislation.

This society has congratulated itself upon attaining the resource flowing from this law for its objects of beneficence, and accruing so *opportunately* to supply a period during which the emigration to the United States has so much increased; and in the greater crowd and variety of character of the foreigner, exposing the country to a greater incumbrance upon its public charities; and making a stronger and more frequent appeal to the benevolence of our land. The German Society has, consequently, since the institution of this regulation, had much occupation in its benevolent service, and has applied large amounts to relieve deserving emigrants, enabling them either to embark here in useful occupation, by succouring them in the first instance in sickness or indigence, or by aiding them to emigrate hence into the interior of the Union; and thus, and in other ways, relieving the public establishments, the county, and the city, of the charge of pauperism, which would have followed if the society's care and efforts and pecuniary assistance had not been interposed. During the time the society has enjoyed the pro-

vision in question, its disbursements in relief of German and Swiss emigrants, have amounted to fifteen thousand two hundred thirty-six dollars and seventy-one cents—the means for which aid have been almost entirely derived from the funds of this benevolent act, under which the society has been the agent of the charity of the State and lessened materially the tax of pauperism.

The purpose of this society is purely and widely *public*: and every encroachment on its resources, impairing its public usefulness, must be a public injury. No community can be prejudiced by increasing the facilities of a discerning charity and of endowing it with means of promptly relieving the deserving poor, and of vigilantly removing those, who may be likely to be public charges, and of furnishing the opportunities and all proper support for useful industry. For such important ends, and in a capacity of such public bearing, this society—as the object of its being—has been labouring, and as such an agent has it been administering the fund which the law in question has yielded. The German and Hibernian Societies, embrace in the sphere of their care the great mass of the emigrants to Maryland from European countries. They meet the emigrants *at the very threshold* of their entrance, and they are peculiarly organized to ascertain the actual condition and moral worth of the individuals, and by proper discrimination, to take the due measures for sustaining the meritorious and for preventing the community from being infested by those who bring with them bad habits, and often a criminal course of life. In all these respects these societies form an auxiliary civil power of great importance, in dispensing a saving charity and in anticipating a *police action* upon that vicious influx from abroad, which to some extent we must always expect. *And we would state that the German Society has in many instances through means supplied by it sent back to Europe individuals, who they found were likely to be nuisances to this country.*

The society trusts that it will be left in the enjoyment of the resource so essential to its usefulness, and connected so directly with the interests of the public, in all the relations of social order and the general industry and happiness and economy.

A. SCHUMACHER, President.

F. W. BRUNE, Vice President.

CHARLES G. BOEHM, “

GUSTAV W. LURMAN, “

CHARLES F. MAYER, “

Baltimore, January 18, 1842.

